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Book and Job Printing

EXECUTED WITH NEATNESS AND DESPATCH.

POPULAR TALES.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

ADVENTURES IN TEXAS.

No. II.

A Trial by Jury.

CONTINUED.

A hearty breakfast of ten, butter, Indian corn bread, and steaks, increased my strength so much that I was able to mount my mustang. I had still pains in my limbs, but we rode slowly; the morning was bright, the air fresh and elastic, and I felt myself getting gradually better. Our path lay through the prairie; the river fringed with wood on the one hand; the vast ocean of grass, sprinkled with innumerable islands of trees, on the other. We saw abundance of game, which sprang up under the very feet of our horses; but although Bob had his rifle, he made no use of it. He muttered continually to himself, and seemed to be arranging what he should say to the judge; for I heard him talking of things which I would just as soon not have listened to, if I could have helped it. I was heartily glad when we at length reached the plantation of the Alcalde.

It seemed a very considerable one, and the size and appearance of the framework house bespoke comfort and every luxury. The building was surrounded by a group of China trees, which I should have thought about ten years of age, but which I afterwards learned had not been planted half that time, although they were already large enough to afford a very agreeable shade. Right in front of the house rose a live oak, inferior in size to the one in the prairie, but still of immense age and great beauty. To the left were some two hundred acres of cotton fields, extending to the bank of the Jacinto, which at this spot made a sharp turn, and winding round the plantation, enclosed it on three sides. Before the house lay the prairie, with its archipelago of islands, and herds of grazing cattle and mustangs; to the right, more cotton fields; and in the rear of the dwelling, the negro cottages and out-buildings.

There was a Sabbath-like stillness pervading the whole scene, which seemed to strike even Bob. He paused as though in deep thought, and allowed his hand to rest for a moment on the handle of the lattice-door. Then with a sudden and resolute jerk, hesitating a sudden resolution, he pushed open the gate, and we entered a garden planted with orange, banana, and citron trees, the path through which was enclosed between palisades, and led to a sort of front court with another lattice-work door beside which hung a bell. Upon ringing this, a negro appeared.

The black seemed to know Bob very well, for he nodded to him as an old acquaintance, and said the squire wanted him, and had asked after him several times. He then led the way to a large parlour, very handsomely furnished for Texas, and in which we found the squire, or more properly speaking, the Alcalde, sitting smoking his cigar. He had just breakfasted, and the plates and dishes were still upon the table. He did not appear to be much given to compliments or ceremony, or to partake at all of the Yankee failing of curiosity, for he answered our salutation with a laconic "good morning," and scarcely even looked at us. At the first glance, it was easy to see that he came from Tennessee or Virginia, the only provinces in which I had seen men of his gigantic mould. Even sitting, his head rose above those of the negro servant waiting. Nor was his height alone remarkable; he had the true West-Virginian build, the enormous chest and shoulders, and herculean limbs, the massive features and sharp grey eyes; altogether an exterior well calculated to impose on the rough backwoodsman with whom he had to deal.

I was tired with my ride, and took a chair. The squire apparently did not deem me worthy of notice, or else he reserved me for a latter scrutiny, but he fixed a long searching look upon Bob, who remained standing, with his head sunk on his breast.

"The judge at last broke silence. 'So here you are again, Bob. It's long since we've seen you, and I thought you had clean forgotten us. Well, Bob, we shouldn't have broken our hearts, I reckon; for I hate gamblers—ay, that I do—worse than skunks. It's a vile thing is play, and has ruined many a man in this world, and the next. It's ruined you too, Bob.'

Bob said nothing. 'You'd have been mighty useful here last week; there are plenty for you to do. My step-daughter arrived; but as you weren't to be found, we had to send to Joel to shoot a buck and a couple of dozen snipes. Ah, Bob! one might still make a good citizen of you, if you'd only leave off that cursed play!'

Bob still remained silent. 'Now go into the kitchen and get some breakfast.' Bob neither answered nor moved.

"Dye hear? Go into the kitchen and get something to eat. And, Ptoley," added he to the negro—"tell Veney to give him a pint of rum."

"Don't want yer rum—ain't thirsty"—growled Bob.

"Very like, very like," said the judge sharply. "Reckon you've taken too much already. Look as if you could swallow a wild cat, claws and all. And you," added he, turning to me—"What the devil are you at, Ptoley? Don't you see the man want's his breakfast? Where's the coffee? Or would you rather have tea?"

"Thank you, Alcalde, I have breakfasted already."

"Don't look as if. Ain't sick are you? Where do you come from? What's happened to you? What are you doing with Bob?" He looked keenly and searchingly at me, and then again at Bob. My appearance was certainly not very prepossessing, unshaven as I was, and with my clothes and linen soiled and torn. He was evidently considering what could be the motive of our visit, and what had brought me into Bob's society. The result of his physiological observations did not appear very favorable either to me or my companion. I hastened to explain.

"You shall hear how it was, judge. I am indebted to Bob for my life."

"Your life! Indebted to Bob for your life!" repeated the judge, shaking his head incredulously.

I related how I had lost my way in the prairie, been carried into the Jacinto by my horse; and how I inevitably should have been drowned but for Bob's aid.

"Indeed!" said the judge, when I had done speaking. "So, Bob saved your life! well, I am glad of it, Bob, very glad of it. Ah! if you could only keep away from that Johnny. I tell you, Bob, Johnny will be the ruin of you. Better keep out of his way."

"It's too late," answered Bob. "Don't know why it should be. Never too late to leave a debauched, sinful life; never, man!"

"Calculate it is, though," replied Bob, sullenly. "You calculate it is?" said the judge, fixing his eyes on him. "And why do you calculate that?"

"Take a glass—Ptoley, a glass—and tell me, man, why should it be too late?"

"I ain't thirsty squire," said Bob. "Don't talk to me of your thirst; rum's not for thirst, but to strengthen the heart and nerves to drive away the blue devils. And a good thing it is taken in moderation."

As he spoke he filled himself a glass, and drank half of it off. Bob shook his head.

"No rum for me squire. I take no pleasure in it. I've something on my mind too heavy for rum to wash away."

"And what is that, Bob? Come let's hear what you have to say. Or, perhaps, you'd rather speak to me alone. It's Sunday to-day, and no business ought to be done; but for once, and for you, we'll make an exception."

I brought the gentleman with me on purpose to witness what I had to say, answered Bob, taking a cigar out of a box that stood on the table, and lighting it. He smoked a whiff or two, looked thoughtfully at the judge, and then threw the cigar through the open window.

"I don't relish, squire; nothin' does now." "Ah, Bob! if you'd leave off play and drink! They're your ruin; worse than ague or fever."

"It's no use," continued Bob, as if he did not hear the judge's remark; it must out. I so't agin it, and I thought to drive it away, but it can't be done. I've put a bit of lead into several before now, but this one—"

"What's that?" cried the judge, chucking his cigar away, and looking sternly at Bob. "What's up now? What are you saying about a bit of lead? None of your Sodoma and lower Natchez tricks, I hope? They won't do here. Don't understand such jokes!"

"Pooh! they don't understand them a bit more in Natchez. If they did I shouldn't be in Texas."

"The less said of that the better, Bob. You promised to lead a new life here; so we won't rake up old stories."

"I did, I did!" groaned Bob; but it's all no use. I shall never be better till I'm hung."

I stared at the man in astonishment. The judge, however, took another cigar, lighted it, and, after puffing out a cloud of smoke, said, very unconcernedly—

"Not better till you're hung! What do you want to be hung for? To be sure you should have been long ago, if the Georgia and Alabama papers don't lie. But we are not in the States here, but in Texas, under Mexican laws. It's nothing to us what you've done yonder. Where there is no accuser there can be no judge."

"Send away the ugger, squire," said Bob. "What a free white man has to say, shouldn't be heard by black ears."

"Go away, Ptoley," said the judge. "Now, then," added he, turning to Bob, "say what you have to say; but mind, nobody forces you to do it, and it's only out of good will that I listen to you, for to-day's Sunday."

"I know that," muttered Bob; "I know that, squire; but it leaves me no peace, and it must out. I've been to San Felipe de Austin, to Anahuac, everywhere, but it's no use. Wherever I go, the spectre follows me, and drives me back under the cursed Patriarch."

"Under the Patriarch!" exclaimed the judge. "Ay, under the Patriarch!" groaned Bob. "Don't you know the Patriarch, the old live oak near the ford, on the Jacinto?"

"I know, I know!" answered the judge, "And what drives you under the Patriarch?"

"What drives me? What drives a man who—"

"A man who"—repeated the judge gently. "A man," continued Bob, in the same low tone who has sent a rifle bullet into another's heart. He lies there, under the Patriarch, whom I—"

"Whom you?" asked the judge. "I'll tell you!" said Bob, in a hollow whisper.

"Killed!" exclaimed the judge. "You killed him? Whom?"

"Ah! whom? Why don't you let me speak? You always interrupt me with your palaver," growled Bob.

"You are getting saucy Bob," said the judge patiently. "Go on however. I reckon it's only one of your usual tantrums."

Bob shook his head. The judge looked keenly at him for a moment, and then resumed in a sort of confidential, encouraging tone.

"Under the Patriarch; and how did he come under the Patriarch?"

"I dragged him there, and buried him there," replied Bob.

"Dragged him there! Why did you drag him there?"

"Because he couldn't go himself, with more than half an ounce of lead in his body."

"And you put the half ounce of lead into him, Bob? Well, if it was Johnny, you've done the country a service, and saved it a rope."

Bob shook his head negatively. "It wasn't Johnny although—but you shall hear all about it. It's just ten days since you paid me twenty dollars fifty."

"I did so Bob; twenty dollars fifty cents; and I advised you at the same time to let the money lie till you had a couple of hundred dollars, or enough to buy a quarter or an eighth of Sitio land; but advice is thrown away upon you."

"When I got the money, I thought I'd go down to San Felipe to the Mexicans, and try my luck; and, at the same time, see the doctor about my fever. As I was going there, I passed near Johnny's house, and fancied a glass, but determined not to get off my horse. I rode up to the window, and looked in. There was a man sittin' at the table, havin' a hearty good dinner of steaks and potatoes, and washin it down with a stiff glass of grog. I began to feel hungry myself, and while I was considerin' whether I should 'light or not, Johnny came snakin' out, and whispered to me to come in, that there was a man inside with whom 'somethin'' might be done if we went the right way to work; a man who had a leather belt around his waist cram-full of hard Jackson; and that, if we got out the cards and pretended to play a little together, he would soon take the bait and join us."

"I wasn't much inclined to do it," continued Bob; "but Johnny bothered me so to go in that I got off my horse. As I did so the dollars clinked in my pocket, and the sound gave me a wish to play."

"I went in; and Johnny fetched the whiskey bottle. One glass followed another. There were beefsteaks and potatoes too, but I only cut a couple of mouthfuls. When I had drank two, three, ay, four glasses, Johnny brought the cards and dice. 'Hallo, Johnny!' says I; 'cards and dice, Johnny! I've twenty dollars fifty in my pocket. Let's have a game! But no more drink for me; for I know you, Johnny, I know you!'

"Johnny larked slyly, and rattled the dice and we sat down to play. I hadn't meant to drink any more but play makes me thirsty; and with every glass I got more eager, and my dollars got fewer. I reckoned, however, that the stranger would join us, and that I should be able to win back from him; but not a bit of it; he sat quite quiet, and eat and drank as if he didn't see we were there. I went on playin' madder than ever, and before half an hour was over, I was cleaned out; my twenty dollars fifty gone to the devil, or what's the same thing into Johnny's pocket."

"When I found myself without a cent, I was mad I reckon. It wasn't the first time, nor the hundredth, that I had lost money. Many bigger sums than that, ay, hundreds and thousands of dollars had I played away—but they had none of them cost me the hundredth or thousandth part of the trouble to get that these twenty dollars fifty had; two full months had I been slavin' away in the woods and prairies to earn them, and I caught the fever there. The fever I had still, but no money to cure it with. Johnny only larked in my face and rattled my dollars. I made a bit at him which he had'n't jumped on one side, would have cured him of larkin' for a week or two."

"Presently, however he came snakin' up to me, and winkin' and whisperin'; and 'Bob!' says he, 'is it come to that with you? are you going so chicken hearted that you don't see the benefit of money round his body? see he, lookin' at it!'

"No end of hard coin, I guess; and all to be had for little more than half an ounce of lead."

"He had say that?" asked the judge.

"Ay, th' he did, but I wouldn't listen to him! I was mad with him, for winning my twenty dollars; and I told him that, if he wanted the stranger's purse he might take it himself and be damned; that I was at gain to pull hot chestnuts out of the fire for him. And I got on my horse and rode away like mad."

"My head spun round like a mill. I couldn't get over my loss. I took the twenty dollars fifty more to heart than my money. I had ever gambled I didn't know where to go. I didn't dare to go back to you, for I knew you'd scold me."

"I should have scolded you, Bob; or if I had, it would only have been for your good. I should have summoned Johnny before me, called together a jury of twelve of the neighbors, got you back your twenty dollars fifty and sent Johnny out of the country; or better still, out of the world."

"These words were spoken with much phlegm but yet with a degree of feeling and sympathy, which greatly improved my opinion of the worthy judge. Bob also seemed touched. He drew a deep sigh, and gazed at the Alcalde with a melancholy look.

"It's too late," muttered he; "too late, squire."

"Perhaps not," replied the judge, "but let's hear the rest."

"Well," continued Bob, "I kept riding on at random, and when evenin' came I found myself near the palmata field on the bank of the Jacinto. As I was ridin' past it, I heard all at once the tramp of a horse. At that moment the queerest feelin' I ever had came over me; a sort of cold shiverin' feel. I forgot where I was; sight and hearin' left me; I could only see two things, my twenty dollars fifty, and the well-filled belt of the stranger I had left at Johnny's. Just then a voice called to me."

"Whence come, countryman, and whether going?" it said.

"Whence and whither, answered I, as surly as could be; 'to the devil at a gallop, and you'd better ride on and tell him I'm comin'.'

"You can do the errand yourself," answered the stranger lafin; "my road don't lie that way."

"As he spoke, I looked round, and saw what I was pretty sure of before, that it was the man with the belt full of money."

"Ain't you the stranger I see'd in the inn yonder?" asked he.

"And if I am," says I; "what's that to you?"

"Nothin'," said he; "nothin', certainly."

"Better ride on," says I; "and leave me quiet."

"Will so stranger; but you needn't take it so mighty unkind. A word ain't a tommyhawk, I reckon," said he. "But I rather expect your losin' at play ain't put you in a very church-goin' humour; and, if I was you, I'd keep my dollars in my pocket, and not set them on cards and dice."

"This put me in a rile to hear him cast my losin' in my teeth that way."

"You're a nice feller," said I, "to throw a man's losses in his face. A pitiful chap you are," says I.

"I thought to provoke him, and that he'd tackle me. But he seemed to have no fancy for a fight, for he said quite humble like—

"I throw nothin' in your face; God forbid that I should reproach you with your losses! I'm sorry for you, on the contrary. Don't look like a man who can afford to lose his dollars. Seem to me one who aims his money by hard work."

"We just then halted at the further end of the cane brake, close to the trees that border the Jacinto. I had turned my horse and was frontin' the stranger. And all the time the devil was busy whisperin' to me and pointin' to the belt round the man's waist. I could see where it was, plain enough, though he had buttoned his coat over it."

"Hard work, indeed," says I; "and now I've lost every thing; not a cent left for a quid of baccy."

"If that's all," says he; "there's a help for that. I don't chew myself, and I ain't a rich man I've wife and children, and want every cent I've got, but it is one's duty to help a countryman. You shall have money for tobacco and a dram."

"And so saying he took a purse out of his pocket, in which he carried his change. It was pretty full; there may have been some twenty dollars in it; and as he drew the string, it was as if the devil laughed and nodded to me out of the opening of the purse."

"Halves!" cried I.

No, I not, says he; I've wife and child, and what I have belongs to them; but half a dollar—

"Or else?" repeated he; and, as he spoke, he put the purse back into his pocket, and laid hold of the rifle which was slung on his shoulder.

"Don't force one to do you a mischief, said he. Don't, says he; we might both be sorry for it. What you're thinkin' of brings no blessing."

"I was past seein' or hearin'." A thousand devils from hell were possessin' me.

"Halves!" I yelled out; and, as I said the word, he sprang out of the saddle, and fell back over his horse's crupper to the ground.

"I'm a dead man!" cried he; as well as the rattle in his throat would let him. God be merciful to me! My poor wife my poor children!

Bob paused; he grasped for breath, and the sweat stood in large drops upon his forehead. He gazed wildly round the room. The judge himself looked very pale. I tried to rise but sank back in my chair. Without the table I believe I should have fallen to the ground.

"There was a gloomy pause of some moment's duration. At last the judge broke silence.

"A hard, hard case!" said he. "Father, mother, children, all at one blow. Bob you are a bad fellow; a very bad fellow; a great villain!"

"A great villain, groaned Bob. The ball was gone right through his breast.

"Perhaps your gun went off by accident," said the judge anxiously. Perhaps it was his own ball.

"I see him now, judge, as plain as can be, when he said, 'Don't force me to do you a mischief.' We might both be sorry for it. But I pulled the trigger. His bullet is still in his rifle."

"When I saw him lie dead before me, I can't tell you what I felt. It wasn't the first I had sent to his account; but yet I would have given all the purses and money in the world to have had him alive again. I must have dragged him under the Patriarch and dug a grave with my huntin' knife; for I found him there afterwards."

"You found him there?" repeated the judge.

"The judge and I stared at him. Under the Patriarch. The ghost of the murdered man had driven me there. I had no peace till I'd dug him up and buried him again. Next day I set off in another direction. I was out of tobacco, and I started across the prairie to Anahuac. Lord, what a day I passed! wherever I went, he stood before me. If I turned, he turned too. Sometimes he came behind me, and looked over my shoulder. I spurred my mustang till the blood came hopin' to get away from him, but it was all no use. I thought when I got to Anahuac I should be quit of him, and I galloped on as if for life or death. But in the evenin' instead of bein, close to the salt-works as I expected, there I was agin, under the Patriarch. I dug him up a second time, and set and stared at him, and then buried him agin."

"Queer that, observed the judge. Ay, very queer!" said Bob mournfully. But it's all no use. Nothin' does me any good. I sha'n't be better—I shall never have peace till I'm hung."

Bob evidently felt relieved now; he had in a manner passed sentence on himself. Strange as it may appear, I had a similar feeling, and could not help nodding my head approvingly. The judge alone preserved an unmoved countenance.

"Indeed!" said he, indeed! You think you'll be no better till you're hung."

"Yes, answered Bob, with eager haste; hung on the same tree under which he lies buried."

"Well, if you will have it so, we'll see what can be done for you. We'll call a jury of the neighbors together to-morrow."

"Thank ye squire, murmured Bob, visibly comforted by this promise."

"We'll summon a jury," repeated the Alcalde; and see what can be done for you. You'll perhaps have changed your mind by that time."

"I stared at him like one fallen from the clouds, but he did not seem to notice my surprise."

"There is perhaps, another way to get rid of your life if you are tired of it," he continued.

"We might, perhaps, lit upon one that would satisfy your conscience."

Bob shook his head. Involuntarily made the same movement.

"At any rate, we'll hear what the neighbors say," added the judge.

Bob stepped up to the judge, and held out his hand to bid him farewell. The other did not take it, and turning to me, said—"You had better stop here I think."

Bob turned round impatiently.

"The gentleman must come with me."

"Why must he?" said the judge.

"Ask himself!"

I again explained the obligations I was under to Bob; how we had fallen in with one another; and what care and attention he had shown me at Johnny's. The judge nodded approvingly. "Nevertheless," said he, "you will remain here, and Bob will go alone."

"You are in a state of mind, Bob in which a man is better alone. I've seen; and so leave the young man here. Another misfortune might happen; and, at any rate, he's better here than at Johnny's. Come back to-morrow, and we'll see what can be done for you."

"These words were spoken in a decided manner, which seemed to have its effect upon Bob. He nodded assentingly, and left the room. I remained staring at the judge, and lost in wonder at these proceedings."

When Bob was gone, the Alcalde gave a blast on a shell, which supplied the place of a bell. Then seizing the cigar box he tried one cigar after another, broke them peevishly up and threw the pieces out of the window. The negro whom the shell had summoned, stood for some time waiting, while his master broke up the cigars and threw them away. At last the judge's patience seemed quite to leave him.

"Hark ye, Ptoley!" growled he to the frightened black, "the next time you bring me cigars that neither draw nor smook, I'll make your back smook for it."

"Mind that now; there's not a single one of them worth a rotten maize stalk. Tell that old coffee-coloured hog of Johnny's that I'll have no more of her cigars. Ride over to Mr. Ducie's and fetch a box."

"And dye hear? tell him I want to speak a word with him and the neighbors. Ask him to bring the neighbors with him to-morrow morning. And mind you are home again by two o'clock. Take the mustang we caught last week; I want to see how he goes."

The negro listened to these various commands with open mouth and staring eyes, then giving a perplexed look at his master, shot out of the room.

"Where away, Ptoley?" shouted the Alcalde after him.

"To Massa Ducie!"

"Without a pass, Ptoley? And what are you going to say to Mr. Ducie?"

"Him nebber send had cigar again; him coffee-coloured hog. Massa speak to Johnny and neighbors—here."

"I thought as much," said the judge with perfect equanimity. "Wait a minute, I'll write the pass and a couple of lines for Mr. Ducie."

"This was soon done, and the negro despatched on his errand. The judge waited till he heard the sound of his horse's feet, galloping away, and then, laying hold of the box of despised cigars, lit the first which came to hand. It smoked capably, as did also one that I took. They were Principes; and as good as I over-tasted."

I passed the whole of that day *à la tete* with the judge, who, I soon found, knew various friends of mine in the States. I told him the circumstances under which I had come to Texas, and the intention I had of settling there should I find the country to my liking. During our long conversation, I was able to form a very different, and much more favorable estimate of his character, than I had done from his interview with Bob. He was the very man to be useful to a new country; of great energy, sound judgement, enlarged and liberal views. He gave me some curious information as to the state of things in Texas; and did not think it necessary to conceal from me, as an American, and one who intended settling in the country, that there was a plan in agitation for throwing off the Mexican yoke, and declaring Texas an independent Republic.

Although the project was as yet not quite ripe for execution, it was discussed freely and openly by the American settlers. It is the interests of every man to keep it secret, said the judge; and there can be nothing to induce even the worst amongst us to betray a cause by the success of which he is sure to profit. We have many bad characters in Texas, the off-scourings of the United States, men like Bob, or far worse than him; but debauched, gambling villains though they be, they are the men we want when it comes to

the struggle; and when that time arrives, they will all be found ready to put their shoulders to the wheel, use knife and rifle, and shed the last drop of their blood in defence of their fellow-citizens, and of the new and independent republic of Texas. At this moment, we must wink at many things which would be severely punished in an older and more settled country; each man's arm is of immense value to the state; for, on the day of battle, we shall have, not two to one, but twenty to one against us.

I was awakened the following morning by the sound of a horse's feet, and, looking out of the window, saw Bob dismounting from his mustang. The last twenty-four hours had told fearfully upon him. His limbs seemed powerless, and he reeled and staggered in such a manner, that I at first thought him intoxicated. But such was not the case. His was the deadly weariness caused by mental anguish. He looked like one just taken off the rack.

Hastily pulling on my clothes, I hurried down stairs, and opened the house door. Bob stood with his head resting on his horse's neck, and his hands crossed, shivering and groaning. When I spoke to him, he looked up, but did not seem to know me. I tied his horse to a post, and taking his hand, led him into the house. He followed like a child, apparently without the will or the power to resist; and when I placed him in a chair, he fell into it with a weight that made it crack under him, and shook the house. I could not get him to speak, and was about to return to my room to complete my toilet, when I again heard the tramp of mustangs. This was a party of half a dozen horsemen, all dressed in hunting shirts over buckskin breeches and jackets, and armed with rifles and bowie knives; stout, daring looking fellows, evidently from the south-western states, with the true Kentucky half horse half alligator profile, and the usual allowance of thunder, lightning, and earthquake. It struck me when I saw them, that two or three thousand such men would have small difficulty in dealing with a whole army of Mexicans, if the latter were all of the pigmy, spindle-shanked breed I had seen on first landing. These giants could easily have walked away with a Mexican in each hand.

They jumped off their horses and threw the bridles to the negroes in the usual Kentuckian devil-may-care style, and then walked into the house with the air of people who make themselves at home everywhere. On entering the parlor, they nodded a "good morning" to me, rather coldly to be sure, for they had seen me talking with Bob, which probably did not much recommend me. Presently four more horsemen rode up, and then a third party, so that there were now fourteen of them assembled, all decided-looking men, in the prime of life and strength. The judge, who slept in an adjoining room, had been awakened by the noise. I heard him jump out of bed, and not three minutes elapsed before he entered the parlor.

After he had shaken hands with all his visitors, he presented me to them, and I found that I was in the presence of no less important persons than the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin; and that two of my worthy countrymen were correspondents, one a procurador, and the others *buenos hombres*, or freeholders. They did not seem, however, to prize their titles much, for they addressed one another by their surnames only.

The negro brought a light, opened the cigar-box and arranged the chairs; the judge pointed to the sideboard, and to the cigars, and then sat down. Some took a dram, others lit a cigar.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

THE MILLER AND HIS WHIG COUNTERPARTS.

Some weeks since Mr. McConnell was in Mr. Douglass' Congressional district making Democratic speeches, where he met a staunch Democratic friend of his, who accosted him very familiarly, and said friend Mack, I hear you are going to make a Democratic speech to-day about the tariff.

Well says Mr. M. I think of it; have you any objections friend Bob?

Well I have, says his friend, I am afraid you are going to interfere with my interest with your confounded discussion about the tariff, and about high and low prices.

If that is so, Bob, I am very sorry, says Mr. M. pray that can happen?

Well now Mack, I will tell you in a private way like, and I don't want you to be blabbing it all around the country, and make a blowing horn of yourself about it, and get me into a deal of a scrape perhaps into the newspapers besides.

Oh of course says Mr. M. I will not whisper it to any one; but how is it?

Well says Bob, now you know I am a miller and keep a grist mill and grind for toll.

Yes, I know and a first rate mill it is too, and all your neighbors say that you are an anomaly in nature; a first rate accommodating honest miller that never takes too much toll.

Oh yes I understand your grist of soft corn; but that is neither here nor there, let me tell you how it was.

Some weeks ago one of my Whig customers came to mill and brought with him a copy of Mr. Evans' speech upon the tariff, and whilst his grist was grinding he sat down and read it over to me, and commented learnedly and long upon that part of the speech that proves that a high protective tariff makes goods lower, and the higher the duties the lower the price to the consumer.

I listened attentively and never disputed a word he said, and when he was about to start home, I asked him to lend me the speech, for I was greatly taken with it and want to read it to the people as they come to the mill.

My Whig friend readily complied, thinking that he had made such a valuable convert to the high Whig tariff protection cause.

As soon as he left I went to work and made me a new toll dish, and I made it about two inches higher than the old one, and immediately commenced taking toll with my new dish.

The report was soon circulated in the neighborhood too, that I had turned Whig and my Whig neighbors looked in by the dozens to see me, and among the rest of my old friends that had loaned me the speech with several others came together to get grinding, and all shook me

cordially by the hand and welcomed me to the household of Whiggery.

As soon as their greetings were over, I took my new toll dish and in their presence heaped it round with flour out of each of their grists.

Halloo Bob, says one of them, you have got a new toll dish, haven't you?

Oh, yes, says I, the old one got a little shocking life, and a little wore off at the top, and rather to small for the interest of my customers; and I thought it was best to have a new one.

Yes, by gracious, says another of them, do you see that, Williams, if it ain't about a third bigger than the old one I will be shot; sure enough, says the other. Why, Bob, what the mischief does that mean, how is that for the interests of your customers as you say?

Oh, says I, very plain, don't you understand it; the higher the toll the lower the price of grinding and the more meal you get.

Shaw now Bob, says one of them, how can you make that out? Now none of your humbugging us with your big toll dish in these hard Tyler times.

Well now says I, it is all as plain as day; come set down here and let me explain it to you; and straight way took out Evans' speech and read to them and explained how the high tariff worked, and although it appeared to increase the cost of the goods to the importer and retailing merchant yet the higher he paid for them the lower he could afford to sell them to his customers, the farmers and laborers who consumed them; and now said I the same universal law of trade and cause and effect applies with equal force to the miller and his customers. He does the grinding and takes the toll, you are his customers and consume the meal, and the toll being the price and cost of grinding, it follows as a necessary consequence that the higher the toll the lower the price of grinding, and although my new toll dish appears larger, yet you get more by it; and all this I proved very clear by Mr. Evans' speech and the argument of my Whig neighbors who gave me the document; and I tell you friend Mack, it was a knock down argument to those boys, they looked at each other like so many bewildered pigs in a Newfound fog, each expecting the other to answer my speech, but it was no go, it was a good Whig document, and they immediately gave in and admitted, that although they did not exactly understand it at first yet it is now clear and as self-evident as Mr. Evans' argument showing the higher the tariff, which stands in the place of the toll, and cheaper the goods, which stands in the place of the meal.

From that time I have been using my new toll dish pretty freely, and manufacturing meal and flour has got to be first rate business, and what is better my Whig customers, although their grist of meal don't last quite as long as they used to; are well satisfied, and now Mack, I don't want you to be blowing away here that Evans' speech is not true, and that this Whig doctrine about the high tariff making goods lower is all wrong for if you do my pond is out, and I am ruined, with my new toll dish operation.

But says Mr. McConnell, pray Bob, how do you get along with your Democratic customers, surely you can't humbug them with your Evans' speech and Whig arguments?

Oh shaw, no, says Bob, I use the old toll dish for them and all goes off well, but now don't you tell any body what I told you.

Correspondence of the Journal of Commerce.

THE FARMING INTEREST AND THE TARIFF-PRICES OF PRODUCE, &c.

WHEELING, Va. June 11, 1844.

I am thus far on my way to the heart of the Mississippi Valley, via Washington, &c. I am happy to be able to inform you that the prospect of abundant crops is most encouraging through the section of country I have thus far travelled over. I never saw heavier, finer or better crops of wheat and rye. The wheat fields begin already to wear a brown, golden hue, indicating the near approach of harvest. Oats and corn look remarkably well. While the fields exhibit such pleasing hopes of abundance, the orchards are no less fruitful. These are literally bent beneath the weight of young and growing fruit. As far as I can learn, the whole grain country of the great Valley of the Mississippi gives promise of abundance. What is to be done with these great and increasing agricultural products? Flour in your market at present is very low. Here it only commands about \$3 to \$3.40 per barrel, which the farmers say affords poor remuneration for their labor and toil. The very low price to which their products have fallen, would be better borne, but for the fact that all they consume has materially advanced in price, which leaves them no profit, or very little, of their labor. I am gratified to find, however, that the effect of the present, and indeed of all Protective Tariffs, is getting to be better understood by this hard-working portion of our people. An old hard-fisted farmer, whom I found sitting in his porch in the heat of the day, about the hour of his dinner, where we had stopped to water our horses, asked me where I came from? I told him. 'What was flour selling for when you left?' I replied, 'from \$4.50 to \$4.62 1-2 per bl.' 'We can't make it,' said he, 'on the best lands we've got and then send it to New York and sell it at that price. The fact is,' continued he, 'our produce has got so low, and all we consume so high, that turn and twist as we will, after toiling and sweating a whole year, at the end of it we find ourselves no richer than we were at the commencement; and those who happen to be in debt find it impossible almost ever to get out.' 'What can be the cause of this state of things?' said I, 'your crops are good and abundant?' 'True, our land is good, we work very hard, and make abundant crops; but we get little for all we raise. The Tariff diminishes the demand for it in other countries; we consume it all at home, and hence its value is reduced. Congress, by putting a heavy tax on our iron, sugar, salt, cotton and woolen goods, prevents our buying from other nations, which makes these things come high. Hence we are losers both ways, and have become heavers of wood and drawers of water, for our Eastern Manufacturers, and Louisiana sugar-growers.' 'Perhaps,' said I, 'you raise too much wheat, &c. Could't you produce less, and get on better?' 'In that case,' said he, 'we should be worse off than ever; for by raising all we possibly can, we find it difficult at the end of the year to make both ends meet. If mere food was all that we needed, we should then get on very well; but we have our families to clothe with cottons and woollens, and to supply with hats and shoes. We have to buy iron for our plows and horse shoes, salt for our meat and sugar for our coffee. We have the schoolmaster to pay in ready cash—we must give the minister something—we must take a newspaper, and buy school books for the children. We must pay the county and state taxes. All these things take away from us the little cash we get from the merchants for our produce, leaving little in the end, to begin the new year with.'

'Whom do you intend to vote for as President and Vice President?' 'Polk and Dallas,' promptly replied the old man. 'Why,' said I, 'people say Clay is a man of greater talents than Polk, and ought to be elected.' 'That may possibly be true,' said the old man; 'but I am seventy years old, and have always made it a point to go for principles and not for men. I voted for Thomas Jefferson, and have all my life been a Democrat, and acted in opposition to the Federalists. I understand Mr. Polk is an honest man, and possesses sufficient talents to make a good President; that he sticks to principles, and is sound to the core. I and my neighboring farmers will cast our votes for him.'

I assure you the injustice of the Tariff is more generally discussed and investigated among the farmers of the country than it ever has been before. They begin fully to understand its merits and operations. They know and feel that the idea of having a better home market created for their produce than they can find abroad by means of a Protective Tariff, is one of the very *hunches* that ever entered the human brain. When I see and hear of the vast and rich fields of grain advancing to maturity beneath the genial sunshine and rain, and consider the heavy remains of last year's yield in our markets, the question arises, what is to become of all this immense surplus? The few people employed in manufactures cannot eat any more of it than their stomachs will digest. For Congress to pass a law against importations is just the same thing as to pass a law against exportations of produce, and is about as rational as the passage of a law to dam up the Mississippi, and drown whole countries of wheat and corn plantations, under the plea of regulating trade!

Under a liberal system of Free Trade, the Valley of the Mississippi would soon become the granary of the world, and its inhabitants make strides in wealth and prosperity unequalled in the annals of history.

It is a country so rich in resources that the worst legislation can only retard it. A despotism could not destroy it. How wonderful would be its progress under a liberal Free Trade policy, united with wise and just laws on other subjects.

GOV. POLK'S ACCEPTANCE.

The following correspondence will be read by the democracy with high satisfaction. The language of Mr. Polk is that of a genuine, true-hearted democrat. We are happy to record his determination to stand by one term. The doctrine was first promulgated by Gen. Jackson, years ago, and has since been gaining favor, until now there is but one voice on the subject—the one term principle was an element of a high success in 1840 of which they are now deprived.

Columbia, Tenn., June 12, 1844.

GENTLEMEN:—I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 20th ultimo, informing me that the democratic national convention, then assembled at Baltimore, had designated me to be the candidate of the democratic party for president of the United States, and that I had been unanimously nominated for that office.

It has been well observed that the office of president of the United States should neither be sought nor declined. I have never sought it, nor shall I feel at liberty to decline it, if conferred upon me by the voluntary suffrages of my fellow-citizens.

In accepting the nomination I am deeply impressed with the distinguished honor which has been conferred upon me by my republican friends, and am duly sensible of the great and mighty responsibilities which must ever devolve on any citizen who may be called to fill the high station of president of the United States.

I deem the present to be a proper occasion to declare, that if the nomination made by the convention shall be confirmed by the people and result in my election, I shall enter upon the discharge of the high and solemn duties of the office with the settled purpose of not being a candidate for re-election. In the event of my election I shall be my constant aim, by strict adherence to the old republican landmarks, to maintain and preserve the public property, and at the end of four years I am resolved to retire to private life.

In assuming this position I feel that I not only impose on myself a salutary restraint, but that I take the most effective means in my power of enabling the democratic party to make a free selection of a successor who may be best calculated to give effect to their will, and guard all the interests of our beloved country.

With great respect I have the honor to be your obedient servant, JAMES K. POLK.

To Messrs. Henry Hubbard, William H. Roane, Benjamin H. Brewster, Romulus M. Saunders, Robert Rantoul, Jr., committee of the democratic national convention at Baltimore.

WOULD'NT DO IT.

The Augusta Age gives the following specimen of much obnoxiousness:

Edward Robinson of Thomastown, who was run for Governor last year, was nominated by a vote of seven eighths of the Convention. Every effort was made to induce him to withdraw, but without effect. The Whigs complain bitterly of his obnoxiousness. They did not dare to drop him for fear of offending his friends, but they knew he was a dead weight. Mr. Crosby of Belfast, Mr. Bronson of this town, and others were talked of. Mr. Robinson is said to be a very good sort of a man. The same thing was said of him last year, when he came within 15 or 20,000 votes of being chosen.

One would suppose by reading this extract from General Jackson's veto Message, that he alluded to the apostasy of Henry Clay.

'If I had been ambitious, I should have sought an alliance with that powerful institution (the U. States Bank) which even now aspires to no divided empire. If I had been renal, I should have sold myself to its designs; had I preferred personal ease, to the performance of my arduous duty, I should cease to molest it.'

OXFORD DEMOCRAT.

PARIS, JULY 9, 1844.

The great popular party is already rallied almost en masse around the banner which is leading the party to its final triumph. The few that still lag will soon be rallied under its ample folds. On that banner is inscribed: FREE TRADE; LOW DUTIES; NO DEBT; SEPARATION FROM BANK; ECONOMY; NON-INTERFERENCE; AND STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE CONSTITUTION. Victory in such a cause will be great and glorious; and if its principles be faithfully and firmly adhered to, after it is achieved, much will it redound to the honor of those by whom it will have been won; and long will it perpetuate the liberty and prosperity of the country.—Calhoun.

DEMOCRATIC NOMINATIONS.

FOR PRESIDENT.

JAMES K. POLK, of Tennessee.

FOR VICE PRESIDENT.

GEORGE M. DALLAS, of Penn.

FOR ELECTORS AT LARGE.

JAMES W. BRADBURY, of Augusta.
JOHN STICKNEY, of Calais.

State Election, September 9, 1844.

FOR GOVERNOR.

HUGH J. ANDERSON, of Belfast.

FOR SENATORS—OXFORD.

WILLIAM FLYE, of Bethel.
SILAS BARNARD, of Dixfield.
STEPHEN H. CHASE, of Fryeburg.

FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER—OXFORD.

JAMES BURBANK, of Gilead.

FOR COUNTY TREASURER—OXFORD.

LEVI STOWELL, of Paris.

The proceedings of the Oxford Senatorial District and County Conventions occupy so much room in this number that a great amount of matter is necessarily excluded. These proceedings are of interest to all our readers and should be read by all.

THE CONVENTION.

The Democratic Convention held at this place on the fourth, was very fully attended. A full representation of almost all the Towns composing the Senatorial District were present. The day was fine though colder than usual for the 4th of July. The action of the Convention was harmonious and united. All the candidates nominated on the occasion are men who will fill the respective places for which they have been designated, with honor to themselves and fidelity to the public. The Convention in its action was not only harmonious, but the whole conduct of the gentlemen composing it, was characterized by order and dignity. This will scarcely be thought a compliment, for our conventions are seldom otherwise.

We could not help noticing the men who composed this convention. As a body, it was respectable not only in talent, but in wisdom and judgment. As a deliberative body it would have done credit to the State and acquitted itself with high honor as a House of Representatives. We will feel proud of 'OUR OXFORD.'

MR. CLAY'S TWO FACES.

Mr. Clay has two faces—the one is for the North, the other for the South. His Northern face speaks Protection. His Southern face speaks Free Trade. Here they are. Please read and meditate.

NORTH FACE. 'CERTAIN PROTECTION should be extended to our domestic interests.'—Henry Clay. 'I voted for the Tariff of 1816, 1824, and 1828, necessary for an economical administration of the Government.'—H. Clay. 'All the gentlemen elected are the decided Tariffs of 1816, and 1824.' They are the open advocates of the protection of the American industry by the Tariff of 1816, and 1824. 'I never was in fact for that purpose, and a high Tariff is sufficient for it, and the Tariff of 1828, my efforts people of Maryland have been directed to them, knowing their bold reduction of Tariff and their avowed avowal of such reduction of Tariff.'—Henry Clay. 'The Tariff was a heavy burden on the whig party and Mr. Clay was but a few weeks since in the South, view of every voter as he and in a letter to the citizens of Tennessee, he said: "I look back, gentlemen, with conscious satisfaction, to my agency in the passage of the Compromise law." This "Compromise" law, the reader will recollect, was the horizontal 20 per cent. law.

SOUTH FACE. 'THERE IS NO NECESSITY FOR PROTECTION.'—Henry Clay. 'No more revenue can be levied than is necessary for an economical administration of the Government.'—H. Clay. 'I did not vote for the Tariffs of 1816, and 1824.' 'I never was in fact for that purpose, and a high Tariff is sufficient for it, and the Tariff of 1828, my efforts people of Maryland have been directed to them, knowing their bold reduction of Tariff and their avowed avowal of such reduction of Tariff.'—Henry Clay. 'The Tariff was a heavy burden on the whig party and Mr. Clay was but a few weeks since in the South, view of every voter as he and in a letter to the citizens of Tennessee, he said: "I look back, gentlemen, with conscious satisfaction, to my agency in the passage of the Compromise law." This "Compromise" law, the reader will recollect, was the horizontal 20 per cent. law.

PROTECTION—TARIFF.

We would refer the readers of the Democrat to the article in this number taken from the Journal of Commerce. It affords a most convincing proof of the injustice of the present Tariff committed on the Agricultural and Farmer. It is a triumphant refutation of the whig assertion that a high Tariff benefits the producing classes. It shows too, how much it blights the prospects of the Farmer in Virginia and consequently gives a clue to the hardships and trials which are at this moment being endured by the Farmers of Maine. The Tariff must be modified or the most essential interest must continue to languish. The letter of Mr. Polk, our candidate for the Presidency, which we publish to-day, gives all the assurances on this point which any reasonable man can ask. He assures all classes that he would have the Tariff so adjusted as to produce the required amount of revenue for the support of an economical administration of government, and, at the same time afford judicious incidental protection. This is what all need—what all desire, and what must eventually be the result, the wind-up of all political action, on this important and hackneyed question.

DISTRICT CONVENTION. How is a District Election to be held except by a General District Convention? It is important that an Elector of President should be elected at the earliest opportunity.

Proceedings of Oxford Senatorial District and County Conventions.

The Democratic Delegations from the several Towns and Plantations in Oxford Senatorial District met at the Court House at Paris according to previous notice on the 4th of July, 1844.

The Convention was called to order by James Hobbs of Fryeburg, on whose motion Messrs. CHAS. ANDREWS of Dixfield, was chosen President, and LEVI STOWELL, of Waterford, was chosen Secretary.

On motion of David Hammons of Lovell, a committee consisting of Messrs. Hammons, Osgood, Rawson, Cobb and Mitchell were appointed to receive the credentials of Delegates and report forthwith the names of those who were entitled to seats in the Convention.

The committee retired and after examining the Credentials, presented the following Report:

The committee appointed to receive and report upon the credentials of members of this Convention have attended to the duty assigned them and ask leave to report, that there are present from

Alexander—H. C. Lawrence, H. Cummings.
Andover—Joseph L. Chapman, Philip H. Abbott.
Bethel—Moses Alston, Robert A. Chapman, John Y. Dustin, Joseph Holt.
Buxfield—David B. Record, Cyrus H. Coolidge, Jas. Bonney, James Spalding.
Brookfield—Eljah Bradbury, Nathan Potter, Bradford W. Ricker.
Byron—Joseph F. Rand.
Canton—Leonard P. Smith, John D. Hodge, George Deoster.

Dixfield—John J. Holman, Charles Andrews, George W. T. Denham—Sewal Flye, John Swan, Joseph H. Watson.
Fryeburg—E. L. Osgood, James Hobbs, Jr. John A. Bradley.
Greenwood—Wm. Noyes, Isaac Flint, Jr. Joseph Hecrick.

Gilead—Asa Kimball.
Hancock—Elihu Hamlet.
Hartford—Rodney Hutchinson, Samson Reed, Ephraim Russell, Jr.
Hiram—George Cobb, Cushing Phillips.
Hiram—John Kimball, John H. Spring, Nathaniel Warren.

Lewiston—John Walker, Jr. David Hammons.
Livermore—Seth W. Turner, Eland Fuller, Charles Smith.
Mason—Artemas Alston.
Mexico—James Yenton, Cornelius H. Whitman.
Norway—Wm. C. Whitney, George Frost, Bartlett Mayson.

Norway—Elijah Powers, Levi K. Paine.
Oxford—Robert Hildbourn, Alanson Bryant, S. J. Simons.
Paris—America Thayer, Hiram Hubbard, America Bissell, Rufus Stowell.
Porter—Joseph F. Herd, Rufus Rice, Leonard P. Cummings.

Peru—Benjamin Lovejoy, John D. Wornwell, Winslow Walker.
Rumford—Lymon Rawson, Alvan Bolster, David Knapp.
Stow—Abner Davis, Stephen Irish.
Sumner—Nathaniel Getchell, Jr. Bethuel Cary, B. W. Hanger.

Timothy Ludden, Cushing Mitchell, Charles Snell, Stephen Gray.
Wald—N. H. Clark, James Masterman.
Waterford—Levi Brown, Josiah Monroe, Eli Longley.
Woodstock—Alden Chase, Henry H. Packard, Kevin Dudley.

Honorable's Grant—Peter Kimball.
Andover North Surrogate—Thomas P. Martin.
Franklin Plantation—George Hopkins.
Milton Plantation—Jefferson Jones.

The report was accepted.
On motion of E. L. Osgood, WM. FRYE, Esq. of Bethel, was nominated for the Senate by acclamation, without the form of balloting.

A committee consisting of Messrs. Rawson, Monroe, and Hubbard, was appointed to receive, sort and count the votes for a candidate for the Senate for the Eastern portion of the District, who reported

Whole number of votes 83
Silas Barnard had 51
All others 32

The same committee received, sorted and counted the votes for this Senator, and reported

Whole number of votes 89
Necessary to a choice 45
Stephen H. Chase had 70
All others 19

WM. FRYE, of Bethel, SILAS BARNARD, of Dixfield, and STEPHEN H. CHASE, of Fryeburg, were therefore declared the Nominees for Senators.
On motion of Timothy Ludden, Esq. Messrs. Ludden, Mason, Turner of Livermore, Simons, and Bolster, were appointed a committee to draft Resolutions expressive of the sense of the Convention.

Voted, To adjourn this Convention till 2 o'clock P. M. COUNTY CONVENTION.

Met according to adjournment. The District Convention was adjourned until half past two o'clock, and the County Convention was called to order by E. L. Osgood. Hon. C. Andrews was chosen President, and Levi Brown, Secretary.

On motion of Mr. Hammons, Messrs. Hammons, Whitman, and Chapman of Bethel, were appointed a committee to receive, sort and count the votes for a candidate for County Commissioner.

On the first ballot there was no choice.
Necessary to a choice 52
James Burbank had 27
John Warren 31
All others 14

At the second ballot JAMES BURBANK had 52 of 83 votes, and was declared elected.
Messrs. Osgood, Bissell, and Mitchell were appointed to receive, sort and count the votes for County Treasurer.

They reported that the Whole number of votes was 82
Necessary to a choice 42
Levi Stowell had 34
All others 48

LEVI STOWELL was declared elected.
The County Convention was then adjourned.

In District Convention. The following gentlemen were appointed a committee for the Oxford Senatorial District, viz:—Virgil D. Paris, of Paris, Lee Sutcliffe and Lyman Rawson, of Rumford, John Warren, of Hiram, and Asa Kimball, of Gilead.

The following Resolutions were then presented and read by T. Ludden, Esq. Chairman of Committee on Resolutions.

1. Resolved, That we still cherish with unwavering confidence the principles of the Democratic party—that the past years of Federal misrule have served to increase our zeal and strengthen our arm for the coming contest.

2. Resolved, That we have no views to conceal from the public eye, but are proud to unfold our principles to an impartial and intelligent community of freemen—that we would not capitulate the weak and timid by ostentatious pageantry and show—blunt the understanding and bend the judgment of the voracious, by bribery and measures of coercion, and thus initiate the course of our opponents; but we would that all know and understand our faith, and independently judge whether or not it bestows "the greatest good upon the greatest number."

Whereas, we fully concur in the doctrine embraced in the Resolutions adopted by our Democratic National Convention, as clearly and forcibly setting forth the fundamental principles of our party, and that our "position" may be properly "defined," in the language of that Convention:

1. That the federal government is one of limited powers, derived solely from the constitution, and the grant of power shown therein, ought to be strictly construed by all the departments and agents of the government, and that it is inexpedient and dangerous to exercise doubtful constitutional powers.

2. That the constitution does not confer upon the general government the power to commence and carry on a general system of internal improvements.

3. That the constitution does not confer authority upon the federal government, directly or indirectly, to assume the debts of the several States, contracted for local internal improvements, or other State purposes; nor

This image shows a dark, vertical, textured strip, likely a book binding or a scan artifact. The strip is predominantly black with a grainy texture. On the right side, there is a lighter, textured area that appears to be a different material or a scan artifact. The overall appearance is that of a close-up of a physical object, possibly a book spine or a piece of paper with a dark edge.

